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15. ABSTRACT (A 200-word or less factual summary of most significant information. If document includes a significant bibliography or literature survey, mention it here.) <p>There is a growing need within the Federal government for a user-oriented, system-independent, <u>functional</u> means of specifying data communication performance. A recently published Federal Standard, Interim Federal Standard 1033, defines a set of standard performance parameters designed to meet that need. This report is basically an explanation and elaboration of that standard. The report first outlines the need for the standard, and the potential benefits of its use, from the viewpoint of the end user, the communication supplier, and the communication manager. The report then summarizes the objectives and content of the standard in informal, nontechnical terms. Finally, the report examines the meaning and importance of each standard parameter in a series of tutorial parameter "essays." Typical parameter values are presented, and design implications are discussed.</p>			
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